



I was honored to join Middletown Parks & Recreation Director Raymond Santostefano, Middletown Mayor Sebastian Giuliano, driver Howie Leland and Representative Joseph Serra to cut the ribbon dedicating the Middletown Senior Center's new seniors' bus. In September 2007, I helped secure a state grant to cover part of the cost of the bus, which is more fuel efficient, has more seats and has greater wheelchair accessibility.

Aid For Our Towns

A very important part of my job representing the people of the 9th state Senate District is ensuring Cromwell, Middletown, Newington, Rocky Hill and Wethersfield receive their fair share of state funding. I am pleased to report the following grants and reimbursements from the state in Fiscal Year 2008–2009:

	Fiscal Year 08-09
Total Education Grants	\$60,747,610
Town Aid Road Fund Grant	\$1,296,248
Mashantucket Pequot & Mohegan Fund Grant	\$3,297,619
Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP)	\$1,131,583
Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)	\$12,237,924
Total	\$78,710,984



State Bonding for Athletic Field in Newington

On May 30th, the State Bond Commission released \$500,000 for a new athletic field in Newington. The multi-purpose field will be installed at the Clem Lemire Sports Complex on New Britain Avenue in Newington. I was proud to obtain this funding to enhance the athletic opportunities for the young people of Newington.

MEMORIAL DAY IN MIDDLETOWN

I was honored to march in Middletown's Memorial Day Parade along with State Senator Tom Gaffey, State Representative Joe Serra, and Probate Judge Joe Marino.



Dear Neighbor:

By almost any measure, the nation is in a recession and states across America are feeling the effects.

Connecticut faces these uncertain times with a biennial budget that makes important investments in local schools, roads, health care, school readiness, municipal aid, criminal justice programs, and other vital needs.

However, as state revenue forecasts continue to drop, and just as Connecticut's families are tightening their belts, so must our state government. While we held the line on any new spending during this past legislative session, we were still able to find ways to help the people of our state by enacting long-needed reforms in our criminal justice system, health care, consumer protection, and the environment.

As always, I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Paul Doyle
Paul Doyle
State Senator



IMPORTANT NEWS FOR VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS

A few weeks ago, I was pleased to witness the governor's signing of *An Act Concerning Volunteer Service by Paid Emergency Personnel or Paid Firefighters*, at the Newington Fire Department. The new law allows paid firefighters to also serve as volunteer firefighters in their home communities. This will directly help the volunteer fire departments of Cromwell, Newington, Rocky Hill, Middletown and Wethersfield maintain their membership ranks.

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I'm proud to
represent the
9th Senate District:

Cromwell
Middletown
Newington
Rocky Hill
Wethersfield

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State Senator
PAUL DOYLE
9TH DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

Criminal Justice Reforms

The brutal murders of three members of the Petit family in July 2007 and a deadly home invasion in New Britain in March 2008 prompted an in-depth examination of the criminal justice system in Connecticut. The new laws include: tougher sentences for violent criminals, GPS tracking for sex offenders, more resources for prosecutors, and a state-of-the-art information sharing system for the people who decide which inmates receive parole.

We established a new crime of “home invasion” which targets the burglary of an occupied residence and requires a minimum 10-year sentence for this newly classified violent crime.

The legislature also approved a much tougher version of the existing persistent dangerous felony offender law, doubling and tripling jail sentences for the most violent of criminals.

One of the major faults in our criminal justice system that was uncovered in the Cheshire tragedy was that members of the Board of Parole did not have adequate background information on inmates being considered for parole. We proposed an overhaul of the outdated system and months later Governor Rell signed the measure into law. Now members of the Parole Board must have timely delivery of inmates’ histories and the vital information they need to decide which offenders should be kept off the streets.

Although it was not passed, on two occasions I supported the so-called “three strikes and you’re out” legislation that sentences an individual to life in prison if he is convicted of three serious criminal offenses.

Closing Sexual Offender Loopholes

There are nearly 5,000 sex offenders living in Connecticut. The state’s sex offender Web site averages over 1 million visits per year from concerned parents and others seeking to keep their loved ones safe. The General Assembly is doing its part by passing a bill that prohibits a sex offender from changing his or her name without first notifying the Public Safety Commissioner, and by requiring the sex offender to sign a sworn affidavit that they are not seeking to avoid the legal consequences of their criminal conviction. Regardless of any possible name change, all sex offenders must still provide the state police with their name, address, date of birth, and other personal information.



Allowing Seniors to Receive Care at Home

As Senate chairman of the legislature’s Committee on Aging, I hear from many seniors who require long-term care and would prefer to receive that care in their own homes or with relative caregivers. For many, this is not an option due to Medicaid reimbursement rules. A federal program called ‘Money Follows the Person’ allows Medicaid funds to ‘follow the patient’ from nursing homes to more personalized settings. The state program can currently enroll 700 seniors, but I am pleased to announce that we expanded the program to accommodate up to 5,000 seniors. The state’s reimbursement rate for those in the program will climb from 50 to 75 percent for each enrollee. Most seniors prefer home care when complete independence is no longer possible, and this federal/state partnership achieves that wish while saving the state significant money.



Grandparents and Relative Caregivers

For more than 52,000 Connecticut children, family life means living in households led by grandparents or other relatives instead of their parents. Many of these grandparents are retired and living on fixed incomes. As chairman of the Committee on Aging, I was inspired by a support group of Middletown grandparents who testified before our committee about the challenges they face raising their grandchildren. As a result, we passed a law to help eligible grandparents receive additional state assistance through the state Superior Court.

Prohibiting Unfair Nursing Home Fees

Under existing law, cable and telephone companies and nursing home operators can charge their residents installation fees when the nursing home requires a resident to move to another room. This practice is unfair to nursing home residents who are forced to change rooms and have to pay these fees. As chairman of the Committee on Aging, I fought for legislation that made it illegal for a nursing home or a service provider to charge these fees when a resident moves to a different room in the same facility.



Fighting the High Cost of Gasoline & Energy

We all know that the cost of fuel is sky-high— affecting how much you pay for gas and groceries. While we can’t stop fuel prices from rising, we can prevent tax increases from further driving up the price. This June, we said NO to a scheduled increase in the gas tax.

By blocking the tax hike we’re saving you a few cents on each gallon, and that adds up—approximately \$30 million worth of relief for motorists this year. We’re also taking action to help seniors and working families survive the high cost of the looming home heating oil season.



Veterans' Benefits

We continue to recognize the sacrifices made by Connecticut veterans and military personnel and their families. The General Assembly approved a bill to enhance unemployment benefits for spouses if they voluntarily leave their jobs because their military spouse has been relocated. Legislation was also approved to provide additional educational opportunities for certain veterans and their families. One measure requires the state-run institutions of higher education to offer tuition waivers for any state resident who is a dependent or surviving spouse of an active-duty military member who was killed in action after September 11, 2001. In addition, the tuition waiver for veterans will be expanded to include graduate school tuition for National Guard members beginning July 1, 2008.

CASH DISCOUNTS ON GASOLINE

Representative Tony Guerrero and I held a news conference a few weeks ago to call on the commissioner of the state Department of Consumer Protection to allow the Hess gas station on the Berlin Turnpike to advertise its discount for motorists who pay cash for gasoline. As a result of our drawing attention to this issue we passed legislation in the June special session of the General Assembly making the practice of stations offering cash discounts completely legal. It’s hard to believe that up to this time, it was prohibited by some oil companies.

